ecutive Committee when it was discussing the celebration of May 1. A delegation from the front entered the Tauride Palace—two score men in dirty uniforms, unshaven, weary, carrying their rifles and cartridge belts. They had come directly from the trenches to ask us what to do about it. "We do not know whether this is good or bad. But if things go this way, very soon no front will be left. Tell us what to do."

We asked the soldiers to stay in Petrograd for two or three days while we studied the question. When they left the Executive Committee a passionate dispute broke out. Some Committee members suggested using the appeal for fraternization as the central theme of the May Day demonstration, but this proposal was rejected. The next day, however, Lenin published a signed article in *Pravda* in which he glorified fraternization as the best way to end the war.

Very soon it became evident that the Germans were sending specially trained "fraternization platoons" of staff officers, disguised as privates, into the neutral zone. One after another the army committees took a stand against fraternization, even committees dominated by the Bolsheviks. The fraternization meetings continued nevertheless. Then the Chief Commander of the Central Front issued an order to field commanders to stop fraternization by artillery fire if necessary. This gave Lenin a new argument: The High Command is against fraternization because it is afraid the soldiers will put an end to the war.

A delegation came from the northern front, headed by Kuchin, chairman of the Committee of the Twelfth Army, and Vilenkin, chairman of the Fifth Army. To my surprise I recognized Vilenkin—my companion in the Students' Council of 1905-6. There was still something of the dude in his brisk manner and dashing uniform of a hussar officer, but he talked about military affairs with authority and confidence and the three crosses for valor on his breast showed he had learned the hard way.

I asked him about his decorations, and he replied with his usual irony, "I entered the army at the beginning of the war. Just a whim, to show the 'true Russians' that Jews could be good soldiers. The hussars have seen some action since then. They could not make a Jew an officer, so they gave me these toys. Then the revolution came, they commissioned me, and the soldiers elected me chairman of the army committee. Thus I now have both the toys and the commission and, in addition, represent the army."

Kuchin was less martial in appearance—a young lieutenant with a gentle, pink face, nearsighted eyes, and blond whiskers. He was a Menshevist journalist, had volunteered as a private for patriotic reasons, and had remained in the trenches until the outbreak of the revolution. He was the first in the Twelfth Army to understand what